



A HEALTHY BEACH

EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENT LOWERS BACTERIA

“BEACH CLOSED” IS A SIGN NEITHER THE public nor the City wants to see. Weather, water temperature and bird presence can cause bacteria levels at Bush Lake Beach to rise. If bacteria levels are high enough, the beach is closed to protect the public.

Based on research from Lake Michigan beaches that showed how sand harbors *E. coli* and may be a source for bacteria in the water, the City began an innovative, experimental treatment.

“We collected sand and water samples and found bacteria counts were

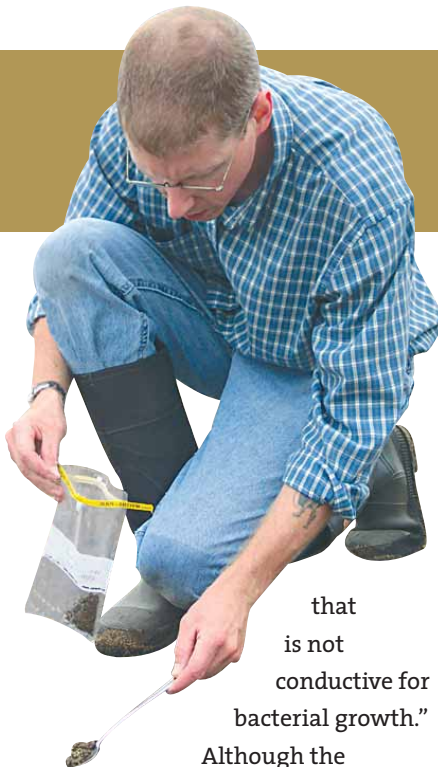
highest where gulls were present,” Environmental Health Program Coordinator Jeff Luedeman said. “We thought that by treating the sand, we could improve water quality.”

In July and August, with guidance from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, City staff applied a diluted chlorine bleach solution onto the beach sand in a 12-foot swath from the water’s edge.

“We are not aware that anyone else in the metro area is doing this very unique procedure,” Park Maintenance Manager Paul Edwardson said. “The beauty of it is that we are using an inexpensive chlorine solution, equipment we already have and limited staff time.”

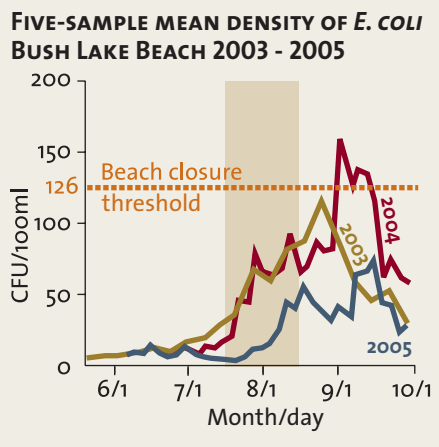
The results of the treatments look promising. *See graph.* Compared to the last few years, water quality improved, bacteria counts were lower and the beach was not closed in 2005 due to high bacteria levels.

“When large numbers of *E. coli* are present in the water, conditions are ripe for other harmful pathogens to grow,” Water Quality Supervisor Jon Eaton said. “The idea is to create an environment



that is not conducive for bacterial growth.” Although the experimental treatments may help keep bacteria levels low, one of the biggest risks of waterborne illness is from other beach users. The City will continue to educate the public on proper hygiene and other health practices that can help maintain a healthy beach environment. Park Maintenance also continues to work with the University of Minnesota to control the goose and gull population at the beach.

For information, call Environmental Health Program Coordinator Jeff Luedeman at 952-563-8977.



Treating beach sand may be effective in limiting bacteria. Treatments occurred between July 13 and August 24.

REDEVELOPMENT AT I-494 AND FRANCE AVENUE

HOTEL AND RESTAURANT PROPOSED FOR UNDERUSED SITE

AN UNDERUSED PARCEL OF LAND ALONG Bloomington’s most prominent commercial corridor may soon reach its development potential. If approved, a new full-service hotel and restaurant could be built on the 3.7-acre site located at I-494 and France Avenue.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), owner of the parcel since the 1950s, has used the site primarily for salt, sand and vehicle storage. MnDOT moved their maintenance operations near Highway 77 and no longer uses the site.

Bloomington Community Development Director Larry Lee said because of state restrictions on selling the property to a developer, the City will act as an agent in marketing the parcel at MnDOT’s request. After evaluating several proposals, the City Council directed staff to negotiate purchase of the property and to pursue

a purchase agreement with M.A. Mortenson Company. “The project is beneficial to both MnDOT, who wants to recover the economic value of the property, and to the City, who has an opportunity to expand its tax base,” Lee said.

Proposed for the site is a 240-room hotel with 7,300 square feet of banquet and meeting space. Granite City, a full-service restaurant and brewpub, is included in the plans. The estimated assessed market value of the project will be \$16.8 million.

“The project turns an unused site into something more beneficial to the city,” Bloomington Port Authority Development Manager Jill Hutmacher said. “In addition to the private market investment in the community, the redevelopment will provide jobs and increase tax revenues.”

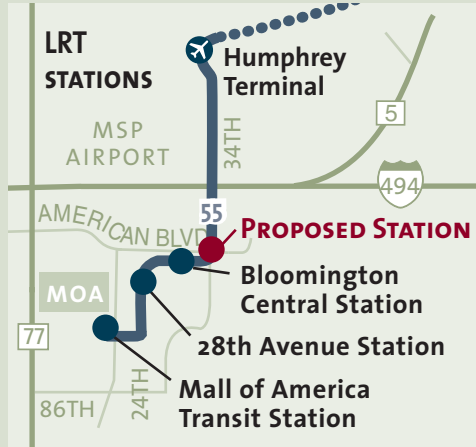


Pending City Council approval of the purchase agreements and development plans, construction could begin in April 2006 with a completion date scheduled for May 2007. For more information, call Becky Schindler at 952-563-8927.

ADDITIONAL LRT STATION PROPOSED

CITY AND METRO TRANSIT SEEK FEDERAL FUNDS

BLOOMINGTON’S AIRPORT SOUTH District is one of the fastest-growing development areas in the region. McGough’s \$700 million Bloomington Central Station project and the Mall of America’s second phase are two significant projects underway. To encourage further higher-density, mixed-use growth in this important development district, an additional light-rail station and more park-and-ride spaces are being proposed.



The proposal, submitted jointly by the City of Bloomington and Metro Transit, would add an additional light-rail station at 34th Avenue and American Boulevard if federal transportation dollars are approved. The proposal also requests that a new 1,500-space parking structure be built at the heavily used park-and-ride lot at the 28th Avenue LRT Station. The site currently has 550 parking spaces that are full during the week.

Original plans of the Hiawatha Line included the 34th Avenue Station, but the plan was modified when a light-rail realignment put a station directly at the Mall of America. Because preliminary work was done during initial construction of the line, a new station could be added without interrupting service.

According to Bloomington Assistant City Manager Clark Arneson, adding the 34th Avenue Station will drive higher-density development in the area that includes housing, retail, hotels and other amenities.

Well underway is McGough’s Reflections, a 267-unit condominium project. Bloomington Central light-rail station is the focal point of McGough’s 43-acre project whose next phases include a 150-unit condominium and townhome complex, a 350-room hotel and 1.75-acre central park that could begin construction in 2006.

“One of the City’s long-range development goals is to create a transit-oriented development district in Airport South,” Arneson said. “In addition to renewing the area, this type of development will keep traffic off the roadways and encourage people to use public transportation.”

Light-rail ridership continues to increase and is exceeding projections by more than 65 percent. An estimated 742,000 riders used the line in October.

ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

MAINTAINING AND RENEWING A 21ST CENTURY CITY

THE CITY’S CURRENT ZONING ORDINANCE, largely written in the 1950s, has been amended, but never comprehensively updated. Several standards and use restrictions in the current code reflect the needs and vision of building a 1950s Bloomington rather than maintaining and renewing a city of the 21st century.

To update and improve its zoning ordinance and related City Code

provisions, the City of Bloomington is undergoing a multiyear effort that is guided by growth, housing, transportation, community vitality and customer service.

Several updates have already been approved by the City Council including landscaping and screening standards, home-based business standards, a new transit-oriented, mixed-use district near

Bloomington’s LRT stations and new runway-related zoning districts. The City is currently working on new standards for neighborhood commercial areas and updating parking standards and aircraft noise insulation requirements.

For more information visit the City’s website, keywords: Zoning ordinance update.